

ALYESKA - I.U.O.E. #302

Training Program
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HISTORY AND PURPOSE OF THE ALYESKA-IUOE LOCAL 302 O J T PROGRAM:

A provision in the Grant of Right of Way for construction of the Trans-Alaska pipeline, stipulated the construction of the pipeline be carried out in a manner consistent with the reasonable development of employment opportunities for Indigenous Alaska Natives. The Alyeska Pipeline Service Company and the Operating Engineers Local 302, recognizing there were many native people with some institutional training and others with limited experience related to the Operating Engineers craft, entered into an agreement designed to facilitate the employment of these people as trainees.

The primary objective of the program as conceived, is to provide on the job training which will culminate in the trainees becoming a bonified member of the Operating Engineers and have the knowledge and experience to compete on an equitable basis for available work after the Trans-Alaska Pipeline is completed. In brief, the scope of the program is to bring semi-skilled and unskilled natives within the frame work of the TAPs project labor agreement as union members.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM:

This OJT program was set up with fundamental authority over the entire program vested in an Executive committee consisting of two people; Representing Alyeska Pipeline Service Company is Mr. Glenn Lundell, Manager; Manpower Resources Alaska. Representing the Operating Engineers, Local 302 Anchorage is Mr. M. F. Alewine, Business Agent. The Executive committee was empowered to employ a Training Coordinator, Assistant Training Coordinator and the necessary office personnel to fulfill the purposes of the program. Provision was also made for the employment of Section Coordinators should they become necessary for monitoring the program.

The Training Coordinators responsibilities are: (1) to participate without vote in conferences relative to the training program. (2) Travel throughout the system to see the training mission is accomplished. (3) Have prime responsibility for monitoring implementation of the program. (4) Responsible for keeping records on all trainees and their progress, from time of admission to completion. (5) Responsible for reviewing all training related problems and recommending resolutions. (6) Accountable for any other responsibilities assigned by the Executive Committee. (7) Directly responsible for Supervision of the Assistant Training Coordinator and the office staff.

Provision was also made for a Screening and Selection Committee to consist of four (4) men, to be appointed by and agreed on by the Executive Committee. Basically, two were to represent the Union, and two were to represent the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. When selecting the first group of trainees, it was decided three men was less cumbersome. The three represent, one for Alyeska, one Local 302 and either the Coordinator or the Assistant Coordinator. It is the duty of this committee to select trainees by personal interview, and analysis of the applications submitted prior to the interview.

A Joint Training and Evaluation Committee consisting of two people representing Alyeska and two the Union was also provided. Their responsibilities were to be: (1) to hear and adjust all complaints of violations in training agreements. (2) To see a record is kept of each trainee, showing his related trade, instruction, experience, and progress in learning the trade. (3) Establish such additional rules and regulations governing its administrative procedures as is required. (4) Have full authority over the trainees and its decision shall be final and binding on the trainee, the employer and the union; subject to appeal to the Executive Committee. (5) Make certain each employer participating in the program is capable of providing adequate work experience and will assume the responsibility of carrying out the purpose of the program.

This committee has not been activated, and the responsibility assigned to it have been discharged by the Coordinators on the basis of policy established by the Executive Committee, with decisions affecting early advancement of trainees requiring concurrence of the Executive Committee.

This program is funded entirely by the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. However, the administration of the program is set up entirely separate from the Alyeska construction effort. In effect, the Coordinators office acts as a buffer between the Union and the Alyeska Manpower Development & Utilization Section.

It is the writers observation this separate entity serves to facilitate the orderly selection of suitable trainees and their placement with the pipeline contractors. Due to the small numbers of people involved, serves to provide a more personal and direct line of communication between the trainee and the program for the trainees first contact with the construction industry and union membership.

Disbursement of funds for salaries and expenses of this program are handled through an administrative service in Anchorage, with funds provided by Alyeska. Alyeska also provides vehicles used by the Coordinators office for monitoring the program.

SELECTION OF TRAINEES:

The very first responsibility given the Coordinators office, was to develop the simplest application for training that would provide the necessary information in selecting applicants for an interview. After the Applications, Interview Work Sheet, Recommendation for Action form, and a Daily Experience and Hours book had been presented to the Executive Committee and approved, we solicited applications from various sources. All Native groups, BIA, State of Alaska sponsored organizations, and individuals concerned with native manpower utilization were contacted. A determined effort was made to insure every part of the State would have representation.

Since it was not anticipated institutional training would be a part of this program, the referring agencies were informed there was little chance of an applicant being accepted for OJT unless they had some previous exposure to the Operating Engineer Craft. This would include Automotive or engine courses in public school or training at one of the Skill Centers in Alaska or the South 48. It was also stressed practical experience at an airport, mine, local road job, cannery, fishing boat or related duties in the Military would be given the highest consideration. The referring agencies did a good job of prescreening applications submitted to our program.

Applications submitted are accumulated in the Coordinators office, and as the need for trainees develop, times and places for interviewing the applicants are arranged. Coordination of the screening effort at a given location is started approximately three weeks in advance so referring agencies and individuals in each area will have sufficient time to alert and have applicants on hand for the interview.

The Coordinators office makes a file on each eligible applicant, containing three copies of the application, three interview work sheets and a recommendation for action form. It can also contain any other pertinent information deemed necessary regarding the applicant. This method eliminates excessive paperwork at the interview site, and each interview can be accomplished in approximately 15 minutes. Each file is returned to the Coordinators office, where grades are average to determine the applicants standing in the program. The interview work sheets for averaging the grades, are weighted to the general characteristics we felt would give us the best chance of placing trainees in this program with a genuine interest in the Operating Engineer Craft.

The ages of trainees selected vary from 19 to 61 years, with an average age of about 28. No attempt was made to bracket a particular age group or educational level. The only extra credence given to public school achievement was in the area of vocational training, this did serve to give the younger applicant a competitive stance in comparison with the application of an older person with work experience. The educational levels of the trainees selected ranged from no formal schooling to four years of college. The average educational level was between 10 and 11 years of schooling.

Older applicants were found to have a lower educational background, due to lack of educational opportunities in their youth. An opinion formed from talking to and interviewing a number of applicants with college degrees was, too much emphasis is placed on higher education for these people. Many of them went on to school because it was the only option open to them in their desire to become a part of the competitive world, when they would have preferred an opportunity for training in a skill or craft.

The trainees selected were those showing a genuine interest in the craft. The younger applicants generally had taken a related course in school and had some practical contact with the craft. Some had attended a vocational school, such as the Alaska Skill Center, Job Corp or were sponsored by the BIA in a private vocations school in another State, such as the West Coast Training Center in Portland, Oregon. The older applicants and those who had attended college were for the most part accepted on the basis of practical work experience in the craft.



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I suggest the institutional training could serve to accomplish a cross cultural orientation by having people who will be foremen or journeymen on the construction job, serve as instructors for a time in their particular craft. I realize this would not be possible in all cases, but am sure it would be beneficial to the extent it could provide a cadre of people with practical experience in supervision and working with people of a different culture.

The degree of literacy and sophistication of the trainees in a program such as this, must be considered in determining the effort to be extended in the cross cultural indoctrination of Journeymen and Supervisors expected to be in contact with the native trainee.

The availability of job site counseling is of great importance. The Counselors should be of native or part native extraction, and where the native trainee has had little if any educational opportunity, should have bi-lingual capability. Since the Counselor is not directly concerned with supervision or training, he is in a position to communicate with the trainee on personal and emotional matters. The Counselor can provide counseling which will help the native to understand the effort being made, is not to destroy his culture or way of life but to enable him to take the fullest advantage of both cultures by becoming an experienced member of the work force.

This presentation has been offered as an outline of one training program coming into action during construction of the Transalaska Pipeline. The program is unique in that the Administration of the program has been in a large part separated from the construction effort. While it does parallel the ongoing Apprenticeship Program of the Operating Engineers, has not been under administrative control of the Engineers local, except to the extent trainees make application for Union membership. They are subject to the responsibilities as well as benefits of Union membership. This program did in no way interfere with or replace any part of the Apprenticeship program.

It has been a joint effort on the part of the Contractor and the Operating Engineers Union, to provide employment opportunities and upgrade the skills of Alaskan Natives. I regret there was not an experience factor to point out the advantage of having this program established in outline form prior to beginning construction, with the training responsibility of the Construction Management Contractors made a part of the Agreement.

